



WASHINGTON – Last week, the House of Representatives' Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (THUD) voted to provide Greenfield Community College (GCC) with \$1 million in its Fiscal Year 2011 funding bill toward the development of the downtown Greenfield Performing Arts Complex.

"GCC has been waiting a long time for a performing arts center that will meet the needs of its locally renowned arts program," said Congressman Olver. "The creative restoration and repurposing of these two downtown historic landmarks will bring enormous economic and cultural benefits to the region. The commitment and perseverance of both public and private partners in this project has truly been uplifting."

"Greenfield Community College and this region have benefited enormously from the important work that began with Congressman Olver's Northern Tier Initiative. The Creative Economy, Health Care and Renewable Energy clusters, in particular, have consistently been supported with federal funding to study and develop the performing arts center concept, expand training and job opportunities in the nursing and allied health fields, and greatly improve this college's ability to leave a smaller footprint on the earth," said GCC President Robert Pura.

"The effort to establish a college-connected performing arts center was a recommendation of the Northern Tier Initiative final report. In working to provide funding for the downtown Performing Arts Complex, Congressman Olver understands the degree to which this college and all of our students need this facility," he added, noting that the facility is critical for teaching and learning for the students in the visual and performing arts programs, and for all of the students at the college as a venue for presentations, visiting lectures and similar campus-wide academic activities. "In addition," Pura added, "residents and visitors to this area will benefit from a facility dedicated to supporting the growing cultural expression of this community – providing a 'living room' in which people can gather and share the experience together."

The funding for GCC was included in the FY '11 THUD appropriations bill as passed by the

THUD Subcommittee. The full House and Senate have yet to act on the funding bill, and will have to pass the measure for the GCC provision to proceed to the President to become law. Consideration by the full House and Senate is expected in either July or this fall. Congressman Olver is a member of the House Appropriations Committee and Chairman of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Subcommittee.

In 2004, the Northern Tier Initiative Report recommended that Greenfield Community College examine the feasibility of constructing a performing arts center. GCC is the only community college of 15 in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that does not have a performing arts center to support its academic programming and the arts community within its catchment area. Additionally, no performing arts venue exists either on the GCC campus or in Franklin County that allows for major artistic showcases, thereby limiting the types of cultural events that can be brought to this rural region. This project, over a year in development, has included the collaboration of numerous public and private partners including, the Town of Greenfield, the Franklin County Community Development Corporation, the owners of the Garden Cinemas, Greenfield Community College, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the National Park Service, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, MassDevelopment, MHIC and Greenfield Savings Bank.

For more details and about the downtown Performing Arts Complex and its development/progress, please contact Bob Pura, President, Greenfield Community College, 413-775-1410.

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